

Happy Employees = A Healthy Business

Class Exercise

Main Activity

Job satisfaction is tied to a healthy work and life balance. Work through the description below in class, then pass out the List of Dimensions. Finally, instruct participants to spend 15 minutes working through the ratings chart. Follow up by talking about where they gave the rating "sometimes" or "never" and what they could do to change that rating in the future, in order to achieve better work/life balance.

***Fact.** There is more to life than work.*

***Fact.** Eight-hour days are things of the past. You now spend 10 to 14 hours working. That doesn't leave much time for anything else, does it?*

Is your life out of balance? Do you spend more time at work than you would like? Do you concentrate too much on meeting everyone else's needs? How do your own needs get met?

Finding and maintaining a comfortable balance in life is a challenge. Most probably, you direct so much time and attention on work that you sacrifice other areas of your life. Think of balance as paying attention to every aspect of your life on a regular basis. It's about attending to your multidimensional self so that you can make conscious choices about how you spend your time and energy at work and in life.

There are four aspects of living that need your attention: the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Paying too little attention to any one of them will create the feeling of being out of sync with yourself. Appropriate attention to each dimension will give you the power to find the right mix of priorities and actions for creating a balance between life and work. When you're in balance, you are more creative and more productive.

Supplementary Activities

A Mind Map of Your Life

Where are you now and are you satisfied with your position? Drawing a Mind Map of your life can help identify areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Take a large sheet of paper and write "MYSELF NOW" in the center. From this, draw branches representing different areas of your life. Next draw lines coming from the main branches, representing offshoots. Finally, add a star to show satisfaction and a black spot to show dissatisfaction. Parts of your life you might want to include are: ambitions, travel, work, health, hobbies, friends, lovers, family, money, retirement, education, creativity, spirituality, and so on.

Your Relationship With Your Work

Do you see work as a means to an end—for example, your salary pays the bills you have to pay?

Do you see work as an escape from being at home?

How do you see work fitting in with your life?

Life Dimensions

Listed below are some actions you can take in each of the dimensions that will assist you in creating more balance between work and life:

1. Your *physical* self at work:

- Take frequent breaks.
- If you find you are sitting down a lot, stand up and move around approximately every 15 minutes.
- If you're on your feet, wear comfortable shoes, stretch your back and legs, and sit down periodically.
- Invest in an ergonomically correct work area.
- Take time for well-balanced meals.

2. Your *physical* self in life:

- Exercise.
- Rest and relax your body.
- Get the appropriate amount of sleep you need.
- Eat nutritious foods.
- Refrain from smoking.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.

3. Your *emotional* self at work:

- Monitor the emotions you feel.
- Take time to process what you observe.
- Refrain from dumping your feelings on someone else, especially when you're feeling angry.
- Take a break before dealing with an emotionally charged situation so that you can respond in an appropriate manner.
- At the end of the working day, release all your concerns so that you can be ready for time outside of work.
- Leave work at work.

4. Your *emotional* self in life:

- Take time for yourself daily.
- Meditate, commune with nature, or read inspirational material.
- Sit and do nothing.
- Become comfortable with who you are outside of your title and occupation.

5. Your *mental* self at work:

- Plan your work and your time.
- Look for ways to eliminate time-bandits by using technology, uncluttering your office, and saying “no” to requests that don't fit in with your master plan. Set reasonable schedules for project completion.
- Delegate any work you don't really need to do yourself.

6. Your *mental* self in life:

- Schedule family and personal activities.
- Unclutter your home.
- Let go of perfectionist tendencies about how things should be.
- Set goals that allow you to discover yourself.
- Pursue a variety of interests unrelated to work.

7. Your *spiritual* self at work:

- Align yourself as truthfully as possible with the organizational direction.
- Reflect daily on your personal goals and behavior.
- Consider whether you're on the most appropriate path for you.
- Determine whether your daily activity is aligned with what you truly want to accomplish. How you live your life is much more important than what you do. Creating and maintaining balance in life is worth the effort because you'll enjoy the process of living while being true to your essential self.

Looking After Yourself

Rate yourself in the following questionnaire, using the scale “often,” “sometimes,” or “never.”

Physical	Rating
I eat balanced and regular meals including fresh foods and healthy snacks.	
I get enough sleep—six to eight hours a day on a regular basis.	
I feel safe in my relationships and in my environment.	
I take steps to protect myself in risky or unsafe situations.	
I do some form of physical activity at least three to four times a week.	
I take care of my health needs—physical, dental, eye check-ups.	
Emotional and Social	Rating
I give and receive in terms of warm touch, hugs, and/or sexual expression.	
I express my emotions—I frequently laugh, cry when I’m sad, and so on.	
I ask for, and accept, nurturing from others when I need it.	
I have opportunities to nurture and encourage others.	
I have friends with whom I can celebrate in good times and call when I am down.	
I take time for fun and leisure.	
Intellectual	Rating
I have opportunities to learn, to solve problems, to grow, and to change.	
I do things that give me a sense of purpose, joy, and fulfillment.	
I make my own choices and set goals for myself.	
Spiritual	Rating
I accept myself as unique and worthy, with strengths and weaknesses.	
I take time for solitude and to reflect on what is important to me.	
I have opportunities to live by the values I believe in.	